Mental Health and Learning Disabilities

Autism Spectrum Disorder
What is Autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disorder.

Most people with Autism also have a Learning disability.

A person with autism can have difficulty in the following:

1. Social interaction
2. Communication
3. Having fixed and repetitive behaviours

Asperger’s Syndrome is a type of Autism in which people have normal or even high intelligence. They do not have language difficulties.

Difficulties in social interactions include:

Prefer to spend time alone
Find it difficult to understand other’s feelings
Behaving in a strange manner in social situations
Being unable to make or keep friendships
Difficulty in understanding other people’s feelings and thoughts
Poor eye contact
### Difficulties in Communication:
- Little use of language
- Speaking in the same tone
- Being unable to understand the meanings of gestures and facial expressions
- Difficulty in understanding jokes
- Mixing up of the words 'you' and 'I'
- Repeating what other people have said

### Repetitive and restricted activities or interests:
- Repeating certain actions or movements such as flapping hands, twirling on toes.
- Being obsessed with a particular topic or object
- Having fixed routines
- Getting upset when the routines are changed

### Other features include:
- Being very sensitive to certain sounds, smells or textures
- Lack of imaginative play
- Being unable to understand other's thoughts, feelings and actions
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<th>What causes Autism?</th>
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<td>The exact cause is not known as yet.</td>
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<td>It can be associated with several factors.</td>
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<td>There is a higher possibility of a person having Autism if their family member also has this condition.</td>
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<th>What is the Treatment?</th>
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<td>Although there is no known cure, help is available.</td>
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<td>Knowing about Autism helps. Educating family and carers about Autism is extremely important.</td>
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**Various people can help:**

- Occupational Therapists can help by teaching skills and suggesting day activities.
- Social workers can help to find an appropriate place to live.
- Speech and language therapists can help in improving communication.
- Specialist nurses can help in managing difficult behaviours.
- Psychiatrist can help if there are any mental health problems.
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<th>Help and support</th>
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| Your doctor: ..................................
| Telephone Number: .................................. |
| Your Psychiatrist: Dr S Bhaumik
| Telephone Number: .................................. |
| Your Community Nurse: ............................
| Telephone Number: .................................. |
| Other professionals involved: |
| Other resources: |
| www.patient.co.uk |
| National Autistic Society: www.nas.org.uk |

Leaflet produced and issued by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust
www.leicspt.nhs.uk

Pictures used from Change Picture Bank and Somerset Symbols Project